

## **BAMBOO OR WOODEN STICKS TIED TOGETHER INTO SHEETS FOR LINING SHELVES AND DRAWERS**

This invention relates to sheets used as a covering, for example, shelf and drawer liners.

### **Background of the Invention**

[0001] Currently available coverings or liners are generally adhesive sheets which are adhered with a contact-type adhesive directly to the surface to be covered. These liner products are generally offered in roll form and must be cut to proper size to fit the dimensions of a surface, such as a shelf. Once cut, the product is either adhered with the adhesive or with tacks to the shelf surface or it is simply positioned on top of the shelf, otherwise unsecured. Among the products which are unsecured on top of the shelf are woven fabric liners and wood or simulated wood sticks tied together into a sheet.

[0002] The benefits of using any covering reside primarily in offering a decorative surface to the shelf while simultaneously providing a protective layer which will prevent damage, such as, for example, scratches and abrasion of the shelf structure. Among the problems of present unsecured cover or liner products that are of woven fabric or wood sticks tied together into a sheet is that it is difficult to cut the liner to fit the surface being covered. If the cover or liner is sized sufficiently small that no cutting is necessary, then it is not likely to cover the full surface and will shift or lift from the surface of the shelf or drawer being covered while items stored on the shelf are positioned or removed therefrom.

### **Summary of the Invention**

[0003] It is the principle object of the invention to provide a covering or liner which overcomes the deficiencies of the prior art.

[0004] Another object of the invention is to provide a shelf liner material of wooden sticks, or other materials, that are tied together to form a sheet of which are easy to install onto a surface, yet can be easily sized to fit the surface.

[0005] Still another object of the invention is to provide a shelf liner material which is thick enough to provide a durable and protective surface while, at the same time, providing a decorative appearance.

[0006] In accordance with the present invention, there is provided a removable covering for a supporting surface. The covering comprises a plurality of sticks arranged adjacent to each other to form a sheet and a plurality of binding strings linking the adjacent sticks together, wherein a knot at the end of each string secures it to the sheet of sticks and an excess of the string beyond the knot provides a means for tying adjacent sheets of sticks together, forming a larger unified sheet of sticks for covering a supporting surface, and wherein the sheet of sticks can be rolled up or folded up for storage when not in use on the supporting surface.

[0007] In another embodiment of the present invention, there is provided another removable covering for a supporting surface. The covering comprises a plurality of sticks arranged adjacent and parallel to each other to form a sheet having a first stick and a last stick at respective extremities of the sticks. At least one slat is arranged adjacent and parallel to each of the first stick and the last stick and a plurality of binding strings links the adjacent sticks and slats together, wherein a knot at the end of each string secures it to the sheet of sticks and slats, wherein the sheet of sticks can be rolled up or folded up for storage or transport.

[0008] In still another embodiment of the present invention, there is also provided still another removable covering for a supporting surface. The covering comprises a plurality of sticks arranged adjacent and parallel to each other to form a sheet having a first stick and a last stick at respective extremities of the sticks. At least one linking slat is arranged adjacent and parallel to each of the first stick and the last stick, wherein each linking slat is configured with a slot and an extension, each slot configured to receive an extension of an adjacent covering, thereby linking the adjacent covering and forming a larger linked covering and, wherein the covering can be rolled up or folded up for storage or transport.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] The invention may take physical form in certain parts and arrangements of parts, a preferred embodiment of which will be described in detail in the specification and illustrated in the accompanying drawings which form a part hereof and wherein:

[0010] FIG. 1A is a sectional view of a portion of a removable covering in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

[0011] FIG. 1B is a plan view of a removable covering in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

[0012] FIG. 2 is a plan view of linked removable coverings in accordance with the present invention;

[0013] FIG. 3 is a plan view of a portion of a removable covering having slats in accordance with the present invention;

[0014] FIG. 4 is a plan view of a portion of a removable covering having linking tabs in accordance with the present invention;

[0015] FIG. 5 is a plan view of portions of removable coverings partially linked with linking tabs in accordance with the present invention;

[0016] FIG. 6 is a plan view of portions of removable coverings partially linked with linking slats in accordance with the present invention; and

[0017] FIG. 7 is a plan view of portions of removable coverings fully linked with linking slats in accordance with the present invention.

### Description of the Preferred Embodiment

[0018] Reference is now made to the drawings wherein the showings are for the purpose of illustrating a preferred embodiment of the invention only and not for the purpose of limiting same. The present invention comprises sheets for lining shelves and drawers made of bamboo sticks or other similar sticks tied together into a sheet.

[0019] Referring to FIG. 1A, an exemplary sheet 10 of sticks 12 tied together with pairs of binding strings 14 suitable for incorporation into an embodiment of the present invention is shown. Each binding string of each pair of binding strings 14 passes alternately above and below adjacent sticks, but opposite the remaining binding string of the pair, so that the sticks are bound as shown. Each pair of binding strings is tied at the ends, forming knots

16 at respective ends of the sheet 10 which serves to keep the sticks securely bound together. The sheet 10 is bound by two or more pairs of binding strings depending on the length of the sticks which also determines the width of the sheet. In an exemplary embodiment the sticks are 10 inches long and are bound together by at least four pairs of binding strings. It is possible to replace the pairs of binding strings 14 with single binding strings such that one of the knots 16 is replaced by a loop where the binding string returns toward its originating end.

[0020] Further, as shown in FIG. 1B, each binding string of each pair of binding strings 14 passes alternately to the left then right side of the remaining binding string as illustrated. Thus, if the sticks 12 are removed, each pair of binding strings 14 then forms a twisted pair. This preferred twisted arrangement keeps each pair of binding strings 14 tightly paired so that no unsightly separation occurs during use of the sheet 10.

[0021] The number of sticks 12, and the tightness with which binding strings 14 bind the sticks, determines the length of each sheet 10. In a preferred embodiment, the sheets 10 are relatively short so they do not need to be trimmed to fit on a small shelf or in a narrow drawer.

The sheets 10 can then be joined as necessary to form longer sheets for placement on wider shelves and drawers. Referring now to FIG. 2, an exemplary pair of sheets 10 has been joined by tying adjacent ends of the binding string pairs 14 together, forming linking knots 18. Additional sheets can be bound in similar fashion to the two sheets shown, making a combined sheet of arbitrary length. Binding the sheets together in this manner advantageously creates a sheet having enough structural stiffness laterally, parallel to the supporting shelf or drawer surface to prevent undesired movement or lifting of the sheet 10.

[0022] An improvement to the exemplary sheet of the previous FIGS. 1A-1B is shown in FIG. 3 where thin strips 20, 22 have been added to each end of the sheet 10. The combined thickness of the strips 20, 22 is approximately equal to the thickness of each of the sticks 12 so that a smooth surface is presented for supporting objects placed on the sheet 10. One exemplary method of tying the strips 20, 22 to the ends of the sheet 10 is illustrated in the FIG. wherein the ends of each pair of binding strings 14 exit between the strips 20, 22 where the ends may be further used to attach additional sheets 10. The strips 20, 22 provide a visually attractive appearance while providing a more stable and durable sheet 10.

[0023] A more convenient means of connecting sheets 10 than the previous tying method shown in FIG. 2 is shown with reference now to FIG. 4. As shown, additional interconnecting strings 24 have been provided on each sheet 10. The additional interconnecting strings 24 have a slug 26 pre-attached to the interconnecting strings 24 at only one end of the sheet 10. The slug is preferably made of a material that matches the color and texture of the sticks 12, although any other suitable material known to the designer can be used. The remaining ends of the interconnecting strings 24 are configured with a connecting loop 28. When a user is connecting adjacent sheets, the user simply inserts each attached slug 26 at one end of a sheet 10 into the respective loop 28 of the adjacent sheet. This procedure is illustrated in FIG. 5 where one of slugs 26 has been inserted into the respective loop 28 whereas the remaining slug 26 has not yet been inserted.

[0024] The interconnecting strings 24 can be tied to the sheet 10 at each end by any method known in the art. Between each end of the sheet 10, the interconnecting strings 24 are preferably laced through the sticks 12 in the fashion previously described for the binding strings 14. Further, it is not necessary to add additional strings 24 but, instead, one or more pairs of binding strings 14 can serve as an interconnecting pair 24. The sheets 10 illustrated in FIGS. 4-5 are preferably provided with slats 20, 22, however, the sheets 10 can also be configured without the slats.

[0025] Still another sheet interconnecting method is illustrated in FIGS. 6-7. Each sheet 10 may be provided with a slotted linking piece 30 at each end. The linking piece 30 is preferably a material that is similar in color and texture to the sticks 12, and the linking pieces are preferably of approximately the same thickness as the sticks 12. Each linking piece 30 is configured with a slot 32 and an extended tab 34 that can be received by the slot 32 of an adjacent sheet 10.

[0026] The invention has been described with reference to a preferred embodiment. The invention has also been described with respect to several alternate embodiments. These and other variations and modifications of the invention will occur to others upon the reading and understanding of this specification. It is intended that all such variations, alterations and modifications, be included insofar as they come within the scope of the appended claims or the equivalents thereof.